



Motorcycle Safety

Californians love their motorcycles, both for scenic riding and commuting. There are nearly 900,000 registered motorcycles in the state, according to 2018 numbers from the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). With hundreds of thousands of riders using the same roadways as bicyclists, drivers and pedestrians, sharing the road is more important than ever.

Motorcycle deaths have been trending in the wrong direction in California over the past decade. In 2017, 576 people were killed in motorcycle crashes on California roads, a nearly 17 percent increase from 2015.

Controlling a motorcycle can be challenging, and takes balance, coordination and good judgment. Since motorcycle riders are out in the open, they do not have the same protections as drivers do, and are harder to see.

Motorcycle riders have the same rights and responsibilities as drivers do. Being more aware of one another and practicing safe behaviors on the road will help reduce the amount of crashes, injuries and deaths involving motorcycles.

The California Highway Patrol (CHP) offers motorcycle training courses statewide. To find a training center near you, visit chp.ca.gov and search "California Motorcyclist Training."

Motorcycle Safety Tips

Always wear a helmet

Watch your speed

Keep your distance

Use your turn signal

Wear bright colors and protective gear



AWARENESS FOR DRIVERS

- ✓ Slow down behind motorcycles
- ✓ Changing lanes? Use your signal
- ✓ Check your mirrors & blind spots
- ✓ Be courteous and share the road
- ✓ Always look twice at intersections
- ✓ Never share lane with motorcycle

Lane splitting

Since 2017, lane splitting has been defined in the California Vehicle Code as driving a motorcycle between two rows of stopped or moving vehicles in the same lane.

While legal, drivers and riders should be extra careful and take a few factors into account when practicing lane splitting.



Consider the width of lanes, size of surrounding vehicles, as well as lighting, roadway and weather conditions.



Avoid lane splitting next to larger vehicles such as big rigs, buses and motorhomes.



Never ride on the shoulder. This is illegal.



It is more dangerous to split lanes at higher speeds. It is typically safer to split between the far left lanes.



Intentionally blocking, opening a car door, or any action that can cause harm to a motorcycle rider is illegal.



Drivers should give enough room for motorcycle riders to pass.